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EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES AGRANA FRUIT IS NOW OPEN FOR BUSINESS IN CENTRAL NEW YORK

New to New York Company Will Create More Than 100 Jobs & Bolster State's Yogurt Industry

Empire State Development (ESD) today announced that Agrana Fruit, the top producer of fruit preparations for the dairy industry, has completed construction of its new manufacturing and distribution operation in the Town of Lysander, Onondaga County, and has already created 60 new jobs to date. When fully operational, the company will employ approximately 120 people at the \$50 million facility, which will process all types of fruit for yogurt, including New York-grown fruit.

As the company sought to expand its market presence and meet customer demand in North America, it considered more than 50 Northeast locations, ultimately choosing New York State. The Empire State's flourishing yogurt industry was a key factor in Agrana's decision, offering the company a central location for production and distribution to leading yogurt companies in New York, as well as the Northeast and Canada.

"New York State is the yogurt capital of America and the completion of Agrana's new facility will allow every step of yogurt production to take place in New York State - from local milk and produce to manufacturing yogurt and fruit preparations," said Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Kenneth Adams. "Thanks to New York's flourishing yogurt industry, Agrana chose the Empire State to invest in and the more than 100 new jobs they're creating is a huge win for Central New York."

"Today is truly an historic day for AGRANA Fruit US, as we officially opened our fourth fruit preparation plant in the great state of New York," Bob Prendes, President & CEO of Agrana Fruit US. "During the Yogurt Summit held in August of 2012, Governor Cuomo promised he would bring a fruit company to the state of New York. Today we are celebrating the realization of that vision and I'm thrilled to say that Agrana Fruit is extremely proud to be the new apple of New York's eye."

Agrana's new manufacturing plant in New York State completes a key goal identified at the Yogurt Summit convened in August 2012 by Governor Andrew Cuomo. At the summit, yogurt industry representatives and farmers discussed how much of the fruit processing for yogurt products was conducted outside of New York, although the rest of the process, from growing the fruit to making the yogurt, was performed in state. With Agrana now operating in Onondaga County, the yogurt production process may be completed entirely within New York State.

"This is a project that our team worked hard to bring to Onondaga County and we are pleased to welcome Agrana to our community," said Onondaga County Executive Joanie Mahoney. "New York State is well suited to host food processing projects like these and the competition for these opportunities is fierce. Governor Cuomo recognizes this and has made creating jobs like these a priority and the proof of that can be seen in today's announcement. Thank you to Agrana for choosing Onondaga County and thank you also to Governor Cuomo for placing a priority on bringing projects like these to New York State. "

"Governor Cuomo's focus on spurring the growth of industries such as yogurt through an entrepreneurial government has helped our state become the yogurt capital of the nation and the third leading national producer of milk," said State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball. "New York's hard working farmers are a natural fit for this industry as they already produce a number of high-quality fruits that go in yogurt such as peaches, strawberries and blueberries. Agrana Fruit is a welcome addition to an expanding sector of the economy and its investment in Central New York will help the yogurt industry keep growing in this state for years to come."

"Agrana Fruit's commitment to New York is a testament to the strength of the agricultural sector in the state," said Dean Norton, President of New York Farm Bureau. "The quality of fruit grown on our orchards and family farms combined with a thriving dairy industry serve as a foundation for rural economic development. New York Farm Bureau congratulates Agrana on today's big opening, and we appreciate Governor Cuomo and his economic development team for helping make today possible."

In order to attract Agrana's expansion to New York, ESD is providing the company with a grant of up to \$600,000 and \$2 million in Excelsior Tax Credits. Both incentives are performance-based and directly tied to the company's job creation and investment commitments.

As Greek yogurt has become more popular across America over the past few years, New York State has become widely recognized as the country's yogurt capital. Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, the state has forged new partnerships with the industry, highlighted at New York's first Yogurt Summit, after which the Governor announced new measures to help dairy farmers increase the size of their herds and milk production, as well as assist dairy farmers in managing the large amount of waste produced by cows and save money on energy costs by turning waste into a renewable source of energy.

Agrana is the foremost sugar company in Central and Eastern Europe. It is the leading supplier of specialized starch products in Europe by a considerable margin, as well as being the largest producer of bioethanol in Austria and Hungary. In the field of fruit, Agrana is the top global producer of fruit preparations for the dairy industry and the leading producer of fruit juice concentrates in Europe. For the full business year, Agrana expects Group revenue of around \$ 4.0 billion. Agrana employs approximately 8,800 personnel at 56 sites in 26 countries around the world. Agrana currently operates three North American production sites in Botkins, Ohio, Centerville, Tennessee and Fort Worth, Texas, with its Corporate Offices and NPD Center in Brecksville, Ohio.

Empire State Development (ESD) is New York's chief economic development agency. The mission of ESD is to promote a vigorous and growing economy, encourage the creation of new job and economic opportunities, increase revenues to the State and its municipalities, and achieve stable and diversified local economies. Through the use of loans, grants, tax credits and other forms of financial assistance, ESD strives to enhance private business investment and growth to spur job creation and support prosperous communities across New York State. ESD is also the primary administrative agency overseeing Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Councils and the marketing of "I Love NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information on Regional Councils and Empire State Development, visit www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov and www.esd.ny.gov.

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